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SUBJECT: Santiago Jan. 26 Media Report

January 26 Media Report

Lead

¶1. La Moneda is trying to avoid further conflict with the Government of Venezuela over the suspension of the Chilean TV broadcast station (Conservative, independent La Tercera, 1/26).

Haiti

¶2. In an emergency meeting yesterday in Montreal, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Haiti's reconstruction would require a 10-year international effort. The question, however, is who will lead this effort, especially now that some are suspicious of the large number of soldiers that have arrived to Haiti, particularly from the United States. Meanwhile, Haiti's Prime Minister Jean Max Bellereive stated that his country has the capability to take charge of the reconstruction on its own. Another issue of concern is security. Brazilian General Floriano Peixoto, who is leading the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (Minustah), said that Brazil is solely responsible for safety in Haiti, adding that any tasks that the Minustah and the United States undertake are regulated by a protocol signed by the two parties. By saying this, Peixoto was reaffirming the division of labor in Haiti, where the Minustah is responsible for security and the United States for humanitarian aid. There was some friction between Brazil and the United States over this when President Obama decided to send a military contingent of 11,000 to Haiti, which took over tasks assigned to the Minustah (Conservative, influential newspaper-of-record El Mercurio, 1/26).

¶3. International Development Bank (IDB) President Luis Moreno said an international aid program similar to the one deployed for Central America when Hurricane Mitch struck in 1998 should be applied to Haiti. "Latin America and the Caribbean can and must play a stronger role in this aid," said Moreno (Conservative, afternoon La Segunda, 1/25).

Venezuela suspends operations of Chilean TV broadcast station

¶4. The Venezuelan government suspended the airing of six international broadcasters including TV Chile, owned by TVN. A Venezuelan law requires foreign stations to submit information on their programming so that they can be classified as international signals. TVN did not submit the information on time and was therefore sanctioned for failing to air a presidential message, as local stations are required to do (Financial daily Diario Financiero, 1/26).

¶5. La Moneda discussed the situation in its January 25 political committee meeting and decided to down-play the incident. "This (compliance with Venezuelan law) concerns cable operators and TVN. There is no international diplomatic issue here," said Chilean Government spokesperson Pilar Armanet. Government sources said that La Moneda does not want a controversy with Venezuela just weeks from the swearing-in of the new administration (La Tercera, 1/26).

¶6. Chilean Government spokesperson Pilar Armanet: "We hope to revoke the situation in the days ahead. We have contacted Chile's ambassador in Venezuela and the information is that there are administrative procedures that must be completed. The Venezuelan cable operator that carries the TVN signal is completing those administrative procedures. It's very important to have all the information before reacting." Armanet said that this involves Venezuelan laws "which we respect," and concluded, "This matter concerns the actors directly involved" (Business, financial Estrategia, 1/26).

¶7. TVN issued a statement saying it had received an email on Friday from Venezuela saying that the station was required to submit several documents to register with Venezuela's National Telecommunications Committee (CONATEL) as an international broadcaster. Two days later, TVN's signal had been removed from cable companies in Venezuela. TVN said it would gather the necessary documents to revoke the suspension, which the station presumes is temporary. TVN sources note, however, that while in its webpage CONATEL reports that 122 of the 286 international signals in Venezuela failed to submit the required information, only six were suspended (Diario Financiero, 1/26).

¶8. Senate foreign relations committee member Sergio Romero (right-wing RN) said the suspension of TV Chile in Venezuela was a violation of the OAS Democratic Charter (El Mercurio, 1/26).

¶9. President-elect Pi????era will establish direct and institutional ties with Venezuela to avoid confrontation, said his international relations advisors. At the same time, he will try to play an active role to modify the OAS Democratic Charter. The charter focuses on containing dictatorships in the region, but must now address "Palace coups" promoted by populist leaders such as Chavez in Venezuela and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua (La Tercera, 1/26).

¶10. While Venezuela claims that it had notified TVN of the requirements to register as an international broadcaster last week, TVN claims it was notified last Friday, just two days before the suspension became effective. TVN underscored that this is an administrative and not a political issue (Conservative, afternoon daily La Segunda, 1/25).

¶11. Editorial: "Chavez: Between Provocation and Violation: The

suspension of TV Chile, TVN's international signal, could be interpreted different ways . . . The mayor of Caracas Antonio Ledezma. . . sees a 'provocation' toward (Chilean president-elect) Pi????era. This could very well be a forewarning of the type of situation that the future Chilean Administration will be confronting, and that will call for determination but also prudence and pragmatism. . . to avoid falling into the game of on-going conflict that Chavez seems to be seeking (La Segunda, 1/25).

¶12. Editorial: "Another attack on freedom of expression in Venezuela: . . . It is timely to recall that in the past Chile has been reluctant to condemn attacks on freedom of expression in Venezuela, such as other governments, international organizations, and institutions tied to the defense of human rights have done. This is an opportunity for the Government of Chile to reaffirm the conviction of its democratic values with the kind of prudence that must exist among states, but without undermining the strength of Chile stance in these matters (La Tercera, 1/26).

Note: PA will continue to monitor this issue

Local Politics

¶13. Defense Minister Francisco Vidal will announce today the arrival of eighteen Dutch used F16s. The purchase was announced in April of last year (El Mercurio, 1/26).

¶14. Among the possible candidates for finance minister of the Pi????era Administration are economists Felipe Larraín (Harvard University), Juan Andres Fontaine (University of Chicago), and the head of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) economics department Ricardo Caballero (El Mercurio, 1/26).
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